

Remarks

Claims 1, 3-14, and 16 are pending in the present application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 4-7, 10-12, and 16 have been amended and claims 2 and 15 have been cancelled. Reconsideration and allowance are requested in view of the above amendments and the remarks below. These amendments are being made to facilitate early allowance of the presently claimed subject matter. Applicants do not acquiesce in the correctness of the rejections and reserve the right to pursue the full scope of the subject matter of the original claims in a subsequent patent application that claims priority to the instant application.

Claims 1-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Nielsen (U.S. Patent No. 5,870,548, hereafter "Nielsen," in view of Leonard et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,721,784), hereafter "Leonard."

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is defective because the references of Nielsen and Leonard, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose each and every feature of the claims.

Regarding independent claim 1 (see also independent claim 4), Nielsen and Leonard both fail to teach or suggest, *inter alia*, "an intermediate MTA, different than the MTA associated with the sender and the MTA associated with any of the recipients, and responsible for a specific domain name or for a distribution list, between the MTA associated with the sender and the MTA associated with any of the recipients, the intermediate MTA including a cancel mailbox different than the cancel mailbox of the MTA associated with the sender and the cancel mailbox of the MTA associated with any of the recipients, the cancel mailbox of the intermediate MTA receiving the cancellation

message from the MTA associated with the sender and, in response, transmitting the cancellation message to the MTA associated with each recipient.”

Accordingly, since Nielson and Leonard, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose each and every feature of independent claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 and its corresponding dependent claims are allowable. Applicants further submit that independent claim 4 and its corresponding dependent claims are allowable for reasons similar to those set forth above with regard to independent claim 1.

Applicants submit that each of the pending claims is patentable for one or more additional unique features. To this extent, Applicants do not acquiesce to the Examiner's interpretation of the claimed subject matter or the references used in rejecting the claimed subject matter. These features have not been separately addressed herein for brevity. However, Applicants reserve the right to present such arguments in a later response should one be necessary.

If the Examiner believes that anything further is necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
/ John A. Merecki /

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